

James Everett -

ANDID EXAMINATION,

OF THE

LONDON METHODISTICAL BULL.

BY ALEXANDER KILHAM,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

Hitherto we have been, since the Death of Mr
Wesley, the most perfect Aristocracy existing
"perhaps upon earth. The people have had no
"power: we *the whole* in the fullest sense which
"can be conceived. If there be any change in
"favour of religious liberty, the people certain-
"ly should have some power."

Letter from Dr Coke to A.—K. dated Augrim,
Ireland, April 29th, 1795.

Remember, O ye Methodists! that the reign of
"Popery is past and gone; let it never be restored
"among you under any shape or name. In the
"Name of Him who bought you with his Blood,
"maintain the Rights and Liberties of your own
"Consciences!"

Mr Pawson's Pamphlet, Page 23. Published in 1795

ALNWICK:

PRINTED BY J. CAINACH.

1796.

P R E F A C E.

WHEN our blessed Redeemer showed the corruptions which had crept into the Jewish church, through the traditions of the Elders, the common people heard him gladly; but the *scribes* and *pharisees*, being ministers of that church, became his implacable enemies. They said all manner of evil falsely of him, and never rested, till they had accomplished his death. The apostles of our Lord met with the same fate, from those blind leaders of the blind. They honestly pointed out the evils which had corrupted the religion of the mosaical dispensation, and directed the people to Christ and the gospel, for present and eternal happiness. For this many of them were persecuted to the death.

When Martin Luther, in very strong language, pointed out the villanies and corruptions of the church of Rome, his doctrine was thankfully received by thousands of the people. But the *pope* and *his cardinals*, with the rest of the clergy, clamoured exceedingly against him. He was *curled* and *excommunicated* by a number of bulls which were issued from Rome. It would have been considered as a highly meritorious act, if any of the people could have been prevailed on to have destroyed him. But the Lord preserved him from the wrath of his enemies. Very many embraced the doctrines he taught, which ended in such a glorious reformation, as will excite thousands of millions to praise God on account of it, for ever and ever.

When we consider the zeal of Whicliff, Knox, Lattimer, Cranmer, Ridley, Bunyon, Baxter, &c. &c. in the blessed work they were called to accomplish, we are constrained

constrained to mourn at the sufferings and miseries they endured. They boldly manifested the corruption of the different churches to which they belonged, and sought to reform the abuses which were tolerated by the clergy; but for this *manly conduct*, they were called to endure all kinds of reproach and persecution; many of them could only appease the rage of their violent adversaries, by burning at a stake.

When it pleased God to raise up Messrs. Wesleys and Whitfield, to publish the good tidings of salvation, they were soon called to drink of the bitter cup, which the clergy prepared for them. They insisted upon the most interesting doctrines of the gospel, and faithfully informed their hearers, of corruptions which had crept into the national church, proving from the articles and homilies, the necessity of a speedy repentance from dead works, and a true faith in Christ Jesus. The clergy were alarmed, and not only thrust them out of their churches, but became their most inveterate enemies and persecutors. They and their followers, have suffered more from the ministers of the national church, than from any other quarter. And if it had not been for the excellent laws which tolerate dissenters, they would have endured greater afflictions from many of their *enemies and implacable adversaries*.

It is near sixty years since methodism was first established. It has spread extensively through these nations. We have about 100,000 members in our societies, in England, Scotland, and Ireland. We have upwards of 400 travelling, (besides a great number of local) preachers, constantly engaged in the work of the ministry.

While Mr Wesley lived, he had the chief management of our affairs. Since his death, they have been managed principally by the preachers. There are no ministers, in any national churches, or among any denomination of dissenters, that have such power over the people as we have, according to the present rules of our connexion. Can it be supposed, that in such a body of ministers, nothing should be instituted, contrary to the nature and design of true religion? When the whole management of the church is left to the preachers, and the societies are not allowed to have any voice by their representatives, is it possible for us to stand

stand in that relation to our people in all things which the scriptures direct? Would it not be the greatest miracle that ever was known, for us to have laws and rules in every thing, according to the interests of our people, when they have no hand in making them? Is it not more than probable, that in half a century, several things have insensibly crept in amongst us, which militate against the interests of our societies? If it were not so, we might be considered more than human. And if evils do exist among us as a people, is it our wisdom to shut our eyes and refuse to see them; or to stand open to conviction and renounce them immediately?

For a number of years, many of our most sensible and pious friends, have complained of many evils, which are found amongst us. They thought, after Mr Wesley's death, we should immediately remove them. But in their unspeakable sorrow, they saw many of them continued, and others added to their number. This occasioned murmurings and complaints in many places. Individuals, and in some societies several leading members ventured to inform their preachers and the conference of the grievances beneath which they groaned. Since the death of Mr Wesley, a number of letters have been sent to our conferences, relating the different evils which have crept in amongst us, and calling upon the preachers to remove them as soon as possible. For two years the petitions and requests of the people, which were sent to the Manchester and London conferences, were only seen by the presidents, and a few individuals. On an application being made, they were all destroyed, without examination. This was a very easy and ready way to answer the complaints of our people. Perhaps history would not furnish an instance of such a large body of ministers, treating their followers with such contempt in any age or nation. If their petitions &c. had been read, this would have given them a degree of satisfaction. But to have them destroyed without examination, was, what many of them considered, an insult offered to our people every where. Wherever this was known, our leading men were grieved beyond expression. And since that time, a spirit of jealousy has spread its influence through many places.

In the course of last year, several things were hinted in many of the letters and pamphlets that were circulated, to have our affairs better managed. The Nottingham, and Ashby letters were particular on this subject. Several of the rules of pacification are proofs of the influence of those remonstrances. There was greater liberty granted in some cases among the methodists, than by the last conference. But every thinking person must be convinced, that our people have not the privileges which belong to them as Christians. And until they come forward to help in managing our affairs, it will be impossible to give them satisfaction.

At our last conference, many of us were conscious, that a more equitable plan must be adopted, or we shall see the wheels of methodism stand still. Very many of the preachers left Manchester under a conviction, that unless our affairs are better managed than they have been, we shall soon be ruined. They earnestly wished, that something could be done to save us from destruction.

After pondering these matters over in my mind, with prayer for direction from God, I wrote the pamphlet entitled, "The Progress of Liberty &c." The God that searches all hearts, knows, that I entered upon this work with the purest motives. It was to promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom amongst us as a people. Every line of the pamphlet was written with this intention. Many things I suppressed, determining to produce none, but what appeared necessary to answer the end I aimed at. If I could not write gravely upon subjects that appear to sensible persons, both childish and ridiculous, this was my infirmity, and will be pardoned by the candid. It would require the gravity of an angel, to write seriously upon the subjects I have treated with a little humour. The *thing* called Bishop, when introduced among us, appeared so contemptible to me, that I could not write seriously about it. "To make merry with our friends" over this, in my judgment, is as innocent, as Elijah's making merry over the priests of Baal, when they made wry faces, cut themselves, and cried out to a dumb idol, "O Baal, hear us!"

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There are two parts of the pamphlet to be misunderstood by several of our friends. I shall beg leave to declare myself more explicitly upon them both. The first is, the management of our preachers fund.

It was thought by many, that the rules of this fund would have been altered last year. We strongly recommended it from our district meeting in Aberdeen, by the printed minutes we sent to the preachers. But so far from an alteration taking place, if I mistake not, the clause that had formerly prevented a preacher or widow having more than thirty pounds per annum, was taken away, and that now every preacher or widow, is to rise in allowance according to the years of travelling. Mr Henry Moore, and several respectable preachers, reprobated the plan in very strong terms, (considering it a reproach to methodism) both at the time the rules were first made and since. Trueman and Freeman's letter, pointed out the evils attending the rules &c, but it did not alter the determination of a majority of the preachers. Most of our people who subscribe to the fund, have no knowledge that such rules exist. I considered it my duty to expose them in strong terms, that our friends might have proper views into the subject.

I would not, however, have any person to draw inferences from what I have said, contrary to my meaning. 1. Though a great majority of the preachers of two conferences have agreed to them, I am fully persuaded, they have not sufficiently examined their influence. I have endeavoured to place the subject in as strong a light as possible before them, that they may be convinced, of their being unscriptural and unjust. 2. It appeared absolutely necessary to me, that our friends who subscribe to this fund, should know, how the money is or may be applied by the present existing rules. 3. Begging by the address, which was drawn up long before the alteration of disbursement took place, and not hinting to our friends the nature and design of our present rules, appears *Jesuitical*; and that we cannot proceed on this plan, without acting the part of *whining canting friars*. 4. Among 400 preachers, it may lead some old men, who are badly received, to prolong their years of travelling. If an appeal were made to the whole conference

tion, would it not be found that an individual or more, who may be considered as drones amongst us, are received as a scourge from God, by a great majority of the societies where they labour?

I shall conclude these remarks by observing; 1. It is the unscriptural system of rules, and not any men that I am attacking. 2. So far from thinking that many of the old preachers are drones or are badly received by our people, I believe it is quite the reverse. Many of them labour beyond their strength, and are received as the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ. There are not a few who continue in circuits from the purest motives, that ought immediately to become supernumeraries, or be superannuated. They are obliging themselves in labours they are not able to accomplish. 3. I only add, if any person suppose my reflections mean more than I have now declared, they have misunderstood the design of what I have written. If any has arisen from want of perspicuity on the subject, by not sufficiently guarding some expressions, I am sorry for it and sincerely ask their pardon: though I am not conscious this is the case.

The other part of the pamphlet I allude to, is the ridiculous account I have given of the bishop plan. This was first invented at the Litchfield meeting. But when it was revealed to the preachers, a vast majority of them determined to oppose it. In the letters published the year, several things were said on the subject. It was proposed, no person would have attempted to have brought it forward in our last conference. It was however, introduced and supported in the manner I have mentioned: and was rejected three times by a great majority of the preachers. When I wrote my pamphlet, I thought, to prevent it from being brought forward again, and to cause every preacher and sensible friend to shun it, was to place it in as ridiculous a light as the world would admit of. It appeared both childish and unscriptural to have bishops on the plans proposed; which led me to place the three attempts in a sarcastical manner, that our people might innocently laugh them out of countenance. I had not the least design to injure the character of any man, or to raise indignation in the breasts of our people against any who supported those

plans. It was the system I attacked; and I only wished to meddle with those that countenanced it so far, as appeared necessary to make it sink into contempt for ever.

I believe from my heart, that all our brethren who were for the bishop plan, acted from motives which they thought justifiable, and meant to advance the interests of our connexion by it.

If any person suppose I have gone too far in speaking upon the executive head, and imagine that my observations amount to a charge against the piety, morality, or usefulness of the persons alluded to, nothing can be more foreign to my meaning than this. These good men may be exceedingly useful in great circuits, and be helpful to our connexion in other respects, and yet be unsuitable for a head to such a large body as ours. If my expressions are construed to mean more than I have now declared, I am very sorry for it, and take this opportunity of frankly declaring, that it was quite contrary to my intention: and if I am not greatly mistaken, no person can torture *what I have said* to mean any such thing. Were I to publish a new edition of the pamphlet, this part should be so modified, as to give no offence to any reasonable person. And every other part of the pamphlet, which several of my particular friends, (whose judgement I prefer to my own) think exceptionable; on account of the sarcasm &c. they contain.

So far from intending to reflect upon the preachers in general, I have endeavoured to exculpate them from the charges which many attribute to the whole body. I solemnly declare, that I greatly love and honour the preachers in general. I am sorry that I have been so far misunderstood *while attacking a system*, which appeared injurious to religion, as to be charged with representing a body of men, I truly deem the servants of Jesus Christ, as a company of atrocious knaves: I declare, nothing could be more contrary to my design. Their seriousness manifested to all connected with them, and their abundant labours and usefulness in the vineyard of Christ, must prevent such an impeachment being cast upon the preachers in general, by the methodists.

I intreat the impartial reader to consider whether an easy distinction may not be made, between an imper-

unestablished system, exercised in the government of a large body of people, and the *private characters* of the men who have to act in that body? Whether what I have stated as evils in the connexion be true or false? When this is taken into the account, with the declarations I now make, as to the integrity and piety of the Methodist preachers in general, I appeal to every candid person to determine, whether I have not shown my disinterested love, both to the preachers and people, by endeavouring to suggest a plan which (however I may be mistaken) appears to promise such an union throughout the whole body, as cannot be destroyed.

Many of our preachers do not see the evils of our present plan. Others mourn under them, but are at a loss for a remedy. Whilst I profess myself ready to apologize for any thing which appears to effect the characters of respectable individuals, or is made to imply an impeachment of the designs of the body of preachers, I cannot conclude this remark better than in the beautiful words of Bishop Burnet. "Whatever moderation we owe to men's *persons*, we owe none at all to their *errors*, and so that frame which is built on and supported by them."

I was not astonished at several of our friends (who did not fully understand our affairs) complaining of the impotence of the pamphlet would do our cause, were it made public in the world. But when I heard of the meeting of preachers in London, and saw their pen had been dipped in gall, to have judgement immediately passed upon me, I was greatly astonished. Especially as I was conscious a majority of the very persons who signed that letter, professed themselves to be men, who desire and seek the liberation of our people. The sentiments of the two leading men in that committee will be considered in their proper place. I apprehend that the bull was drawn up by me, and sanctioned hastily by many of the other brethren, without thinking seriously upon the subject. As the bull, however, and their interference to bring over the rest of the preachers to their sentiment, is manifest, I think it my duty to publish their letter, and the answer sent to it, the day after Mr Hunter favoured me with it. I have made a few alterations in several parts of the answer, and have enlarged upon some things, which were

were not sufficiently amplified. The candid and impartial, will be able to judge of the merits of their cause and mine. To me their letter appears more like a bull from *Pope Hildebrand and his cardinals*, than the language of ten methodist preachers, professing to live under the influence of the Spirit of God, and declaring they earnestly desire both the *outward* and *spiritual* prosperity of our people. Our blessed Redeemer, who is the head of the church, will judge between us. To him I commend the cause, not doubting in the least but he will stand by me in the midst of the fiery trial, and bring me through every difficulty.

I shall finish this preface, in the beautiful expressions of the Rev. R. Robinson, only altering a few words which are the language of my very soul. "Were
"to follow the dictates of my own heart, I should throw
"myself at the feet of the meanest of my brethren, and
"beg pardon for presuming to seem to instruct those
"who are appointed to instruct others, and who have
"so often edified me. I would confess I saw innumerable
"errors in the pamphlet, for all which I could make
"only one apology, that is, that they were involuntary.
"I ask no pardon for expressing my abhorrence of intolerance. Always when I met it in a course of reasoning, I thought I met the great Devil, and my resentment was never abated by his appearing in the habit
"of a holy man of God. I have sometimes allowed
"myself a little mirth in that awful science religion, and
"in the presence of that grave thing called a *bishop*: but
"in this thing the Lord pardon his servant, that when
"master went into the house of Rimmon to worship there
"and I bowed myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bowed myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon his servant in this thing." Preface to the second volume of Claude's Essays.

ALNWICK,
Jan. 6th 1796.



THE
LONDON METHODISTICAL BULL.

TO MR WILLIAM HUNTER, Chairman of the New-
castle district.

London, 5th Dec. 1795

DEAR BROTHER,

We have met together solemnly to consider the pamphlet lately published by Alexander Kilham, entitled, "The Progress of Liberty," and think ourselves obliged to write to you on the subject, as the Chairman of that district in which Mr Kilham labours.

We detest the spirit of the book, and are persuaded it contains most malicious expressions against the body of preachers in general, and against respectable individuals in particular. We have no doubt the pamphlet has an immediate tendency to prejudice our people against their preachers; and to destroy the work of God. If it go into the world at large, it must give the public the most unfavourable opinion concerning us; It also tends,

to destroy our preachers fund, by holding out the assistants as a company of *whining Jesuits*, and consequently atrocious knaves. So bad a book has not been published among us, since the first revival of the work of God.

We therefore, as persons implicated in Mr Kilham's charges, immediately advise and claim a district meeting. For Mr Kilham can do us no harm as an open enemy, but he will do us unspeakable hurt as a secret one. If Mr Kilham continue among us after such gross and malicious assertions, we to all intents and purposes plead guilty, and must by the public be supposed to be a company of villains.

We look up to you and the other members of district committee for redress. Our wounded cause, and the characters of preachers in general, call for it immediately. The cause of God is at stake, and if justice is not done in this case, we may take our farewell of primitive methodism. We desire you will read this our testimony against the malice, pride, and audaciousness, with which the pamphlet under consideration is replete.

We are your affectionate Brethren,

THO. COKE,

GEO. STORY,

JOHN PAWSON,

AD. CLARK,

FRAS. WRIGLEY,

WM. GRIFFITH,

WM. WEST,

GEO. WHITFIELD,

THOS. RANKIN,

RICH. REECE.

CANDID EXAMINATION, &c.

TO MESSRS. COKE, PAWSON, &c.

DEAR BRETHREN,

ON my return from the country yesterday, I met with an exact copy of your extraordinary letter, Mr Hunter, in which you claim a district meeting, immediately, to have my pamphlet tried. I am sorry to find, on examining your letter impartially, that it breathes the persecuting spirit of a Bonner and a Laud, instead of the meek and loving spirit of our glorious Redeemer. I shall beg your attention, while I make a few remarks upon some parts of it. It appears to me, that you have borrowed the language and style of the Attorney General, when he uses eloquence in pointing out a libel. In one place, I call what I have written, "gross and malicious slanders"—in another place you say, "it contains malicious expressions against the body of preachers in general &c."—and crown the whole, by desiring Mr Hunter to "read this our testimony, against malice, pride, and audaciousness, with which the pamphlet under consideration is replete." You will pardon me for correcting a mistake which you have made in your haste. I cannot suppose that *ten methodists* would imagine, the pamphlet to be replete with malice, pride, and audaciousness. You the author is full of these evils. When you suppose in your cool reflections, that I moved me to expose myself to all kinds of slander

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der, reproach, and contempt from my brethren the preachers, and others that oppose me? Would pride have suffered me to have sacrificed my reputation, my place and advantages in the connexion, to serve the interests of our people, as it appears I have done, by your letter? I foresaw the storm that would be raised, but determined to face it in the name of the Lord Jesus. I weighed the matter calmly before God, and resolved to venture my *all* at the stake, if I might but help in removing those evils, which threaten our desolation. I determined to follow the Son of God without the camp, to bear reproach for his sake, should he permit it to come upon me.

Could malice lead me to point out the evils which *actually exist* amongst us, and to press upon the preachers to adopt such measures, as would effectually heal every disorder which is complained of? Was it malice that led Jesus Christ and his Apostles to shew sinners their real state, to offer them recovery, and to press upon them to accept of salvation, without money or price? Is it malice that leads you to pursue their plan, in pointing out to your congregations their disordered state, offering them recovery by the blood of sprinkling, and intreating them to accept of deliverance on the terms proposed? Have I pointed out *real glaring evils* in our connexion, without exaggerating any of them, proposed a remedy, and pressed upon you, and the rest our brethren, to apply the means to remove them at once, while there is hope of recovery? God is my witness, I have done this with the greatest affection, and from the purest motives; and yet you declare that malice influenced me! You have engaged to judge my principles, and have passed such a sentence, as I am conscious the Judge of the whole earth would not, were I called this moment to his bar.

How far I have been audacious in venturing to point out the evils our people groan beneath, and seeking the welfare of our whole connexion, by having

them speedily removed, I am not able to determine. My youth, and my having only travelled eleven years in the connexion, would have been powerful motives to have restrained my pen, had any other way opened for our escape. But when I saw men of longer standing in the work refusing to come forward, the zeal of the Lord constrained me. I can assure you, it required a good deal of courage to face the difficulties I saw in my way. If this be audaciousness, I hope God will ever help me to take up my cross, and boldly attack corruption, whenever it lifts up its head among us, should you make use of a worse word to misrepresent my conduct.

Though you have called my pamphlet "gross malicious expressions," you have not ventured to say they are *false*. It is very easy to *abuse* any thing we do not like, but to *prove it* contrary to the truth, is often very difficult. You have not quoted a passage from the pamphlet to prove what you have asserted. If I have represented our affairs according to the nature of your assertions, it will be very easy to confute me. But I venture to challenge you all, and the whole connexion to prove, that I have forged any lies, or misrepresented any thing I have considered. If you will answer my pamphlet fairly, and convince me by argument that I am wrong, I will most gladly stand open to conviction. But should you only publish general declamation, instead of argument, and make use of abusive language, depend on it, your cause will be weakened by such a conduct. And should you press me into measures I wish at present to avoid, I can supply most of the particulars mentioned in the pamphlet, by naming persons and circumstances, which will carry conviction to all who properly consider them.

You declare, my pamphlet has "an immediate tendency to prejudice the people against the preachers, and to destroy the work of God". In the same charge you insinuate, "That it contains most malici-

ous expressions against the body of preachers in general, and against respectable individuals in particular." In the pamphlet I have repeatedly declared that a great majority of the preachers detest a number of the evils complained of; but cannot prevent them, unless the people, by their representatives are allowed to come forward, to point them out, and help to remove them. I think it is impossible for you, or any person to prove, that there are any "malicious expressions" against any person in the pamphlet: and that it is only the conduct of individuals that is principally complained of. I do not recollect having said any thing of individuals, unless it be in exposing the bishop plan, and in the postscript. In exposing the bishop plan, which many think *benevolent*, I have mentioned no names. If you *twist* my words to the utmost of your power, you cannot make them amount to "malicious expressions." Does my description of the executive head amount to such a crime, that I must be expelled the connexion on account of it? Must I be cast out from among you because I have said, "we saw or we supposed we saw in one the face of a Calf &c."

The prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ and his Apostles, have made use of expressions abundantly more severe, and as sarcastical, as those I have made use of, in the bishop plan. Read 1 Kings 17. Ez. 1. 10. and 10. 14. Matt. 3. 7. and the whole of the 23. chapter: especially 33 verse. Mark 8. 33. Luke 13. 32. Acts 13. 10. and 23. 3. A multitude of other passages speak in the same language, as every person acquainted with the bible can testify.

You cannot justly charge me in the postscript with any thing that will amount to a crime. I have related facts. Two of you with Mr M— sent printed letters through the connexion, without paying postage, which was a manifest breach of the rules of pacification. If I have shown your inconsistency

declaring our rules *must be fixed*, and *deliberately breaking* them in a few weeks after they are made, you have no right to call this "malicious expressions against individuals." What would you have thought of me, if I had written to the chairman of the London district, to consider the steps you have taken, in circulating printed letters *without paying the postage of them*? Would you not have thought me extremely impertinent? And yet you wrote to Mr Hunter, the chairman of our district, to have me tried, when you do not hint at any rule of justification I have broken? Before you attempt to cast out the beam from your own eye, you endeavour *violently* to pull the mote out of mine! There is God in heaven, who is no respecter of persons, and who will judge righteously in this matter.

How can what I have said have an immediate tendency to prejudice the people against the preachers? Our friends, who are acquainted with our affairs know, that the evils I complain of exist among us. They are exceedingly grieved at their continuance. One in a hundred of our societies or congregations could be reconciled to them, were they acquainted with them. It is not possible that my pamphlet, by pointing out existing evils, and proposing an immediate remedy for them, will prejudice our people. No, my dear brethren, this can never be the case. Your wishing to conceal them, and determining to hold them fast, is the very thing that will prejudice our people. And your reviling, reviling, and persecuting a man, that has honesty and courage to tell you of those evils, pointing out an immediate remedy for them, without injuring ourselves, is a direct way to force our societies to look hardly of you, and all who act as you have done. You say the pamphlet has an "immediate tendency to destroy the work of God." Is the work of God supported by keeping our people ignorant of a number of things which concern their happiness? Is it supported by bringing out a number of preachers to travel with- out their knowledge, and against their consent? Is it supported by telling the people the yearly collection is made to support the gospel in the North of Scotland and the West of Ireland, when a great deal of it is

spent in riding in coaches to the conference, in removing of families, when there is no necessity for it, and in other things of the same nature? Is the work of God supported by a preacher with a wife and family, by telling the people, we have only 12 pounds a year, and leading many of them to suppose this is the whole of our families have to live on; when we cost the connexion more than one hundred pounds a year?*

* Our people have been exceedingly reproached by many respectable dissenters and others, under the idea that they do not sufficiently provide for their ministers. To shew the unjustness of this charge, I shall state the allowance for preachers and their families, as it is granted to them every where, without respect to age, abilities, or usefulness. And I am bold to declare, there is not a connexion under heaven of such extent as ours, that supply their ministers by *free donations*, as our people do us.

I will make the account for a preacher, with a wife and four children: intreating the reader to observe that our allowance is in proportion to the number of our family, throughout all our circuits.

	£.	s.
1 Preachers board at 10s per week	26	0
2 Quarterage, travelling expences, & washing.	15	10
3 Letters - - - - -	1	0
4 Wife's yearly allowance - - -	12	0
5 Three Children at home - - -	12	0
6 A boy at Kingswood school - -	20	0
7 House rent, Coal, and Candles -	12	0
8 Servant's wages - - - - -	5	0
9 Wear and tear of furniture - - -	3	0
10 House linen washing - - - -	1	0

£. 107 : 10

ported by the present management of our Kingswood school, and the preachers fund? If you had said a species *priestcraft* and *popery*, with *the work of man*, are likely to be destroyed by my pamphlet, all that read it would have credited your assertion. But as the matter now stands, every impartial person will suppose, that what have proposed, has an *immediate tendency* to promote the *real work* of God in our connexion.

You say, "If it get into the world at large, it must give the public the most unfavourable opinion concerning us; and therefore contract our sphere of usefulness." Are we, my dear Brethren, to have the favourable opinion of the public, by continuing our evils, provided we can conceal them from their notice; or by frankly acknowledging and laying them aside? Must we play the hypocrite in their presence to have their favourable opinion, and be useful in converting souls, artfully concealing what would excite their displeasure? Many of them are cool in their reflections, and will examine matters seriously, before they suffer their judgment to draw conclusions. Should my pamphlet appear at their bar, and your violent letter against it, am apprehensive, it would not be possible to bias their judgement in your favour. They will solemnly ask, do the evils exist which the book complains of? Are they calculated to injure or help the work of God?

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Every person that reads this account, who is acquainted with our affairs, must see, that I have charged the boy at Kingswood a third less than he costs us now. The House rent, coal and candle bill, is often twice as much as I have mentioned. I have made charge for Doctor bills—Women lying in,—Afflictions in the family—The expence of the horse keeping, Attending the conference, and removal of families. These are very considerable. But as many of them are connected with the itinerant plan, they cannot be avoided; and therefore have not any thing to do with the preachers and families allowance, abstracted from that.

Would it better to retain them than lay them aside? If I am not greatly mistaken, they would pass a favourable sentence upon what I have done, and severely censure the measures you have taken, to suppress me and the pamphlet. In my judgment, our sphere of usefulness would be considerably enlarged, were we to renounce what is a reproach to our connexion, and the religion of our blessed Redeemer.

You add, "It also tends to destroy our preachers fund, by holding out the assistants as a company of *whining Jesuits*, and consequently atrocious knaves." While Mr Wesley lived, the preachers fund was conducted by an equitable plan. The *real wants* of superannuated preachers and widows, were the rule of disbursement. But since his death, both the yearly and preachers fund collections, have, in many things, been differently applied? As a great number of our people are ignorant of the subject, I will recite the address to the friends and members of the Methodist society, and then quote two rules from the minutes, respecting the present mode of disbursement, leaving all that read these lines to judge, how far we *whine* and *cant*, when we beg for the fund, since it reverted from its original foundation. The stewards of the fund desire the assistant preachers and others, to read over and enlarge upon the following printed address.

Dear Brethren,

"As several of the PREACHERS in our connexion who have spent their time and strength in calling sinners to repentance, are now superannuated, that they can no longer keep a circuit; and as others of them (who are gone to their reward) have left debtitude widows and children behind them. In order to make some small provision for these, it has been agreed on in conference, that every travelling preacher shall, out of his little allowance subscribe half a guinea yearly." [Since the death of Mr Wesley, the subscription has been raised to a guinea a year.]

"But as this small sum is in no wise sufficient to answer the growing demands, several of our friends have offered their assistance by subscribing something

"yearly

yearly, and if others of you shall see good to follow their laudable example, it will no doubt be pleasing to God, a comfort to his worn-out servants, and a great encouragement to those who are still labouring in the Lord's vineyard; and of consequence give great satisfaction to your affectionate servants in the gospel." (The Stewards.)

While Mr Wesley lived, and by his direction the *real* wants of the preachers &c. were the rule of disbursement, nothing could be more proper than this address. But since the mode of disbursement is exceedingly altered, can we beg by this address, and not hint to our people that the rules of disbursement are altered, without acting as "*whining jesuits*?" If we read this address, might not the new rules to be read also? Because our people in general know nothing of the alteration; and therefore are not treated fairly, when the old address is read and enforced, while the new rules of disbursement are kept from their notice.

If I am not greatly mistaken, the following rules justify every stricture in my pamphlet.

"Every preacher, whom the conference judges to be worn-out, and who has not departed from the work, shall receive 12 pounds a year for life. And every preacher who has laboured longer than 12 years, without departing from the work, and is judged by the conference to be worn-out, shall receive one pound annually for life, for every year he has travelled above twelve, to the time he became superannuated. Every widow of a travelling preacher shall receive 12 pounds a year for life. And if her deceased husband travelled more than 12 years before he was worn-out, she shall be allowed one pound annually for life, for every year her husband travelled above twelve, till the time he was superannuated." Rule 5. of the fund.

These *unscriptural, unjust* rules, sufficiently prove everything I have declared on this subject. I shall leave (who have made use of the elegant expression) to determine, how far we are "*atrocious knaves*" while we act as we do at present on this head. I cannot suppose that God will suffer you to prop up the fund much longer

longer, on its present sandy foundation. I refer to the pamphlet to know the sentiments of our sensible friends in these parts upon it. It is hardly possible to execrate the system of rules too much.

You seem determined that I shall not continue in connexion. It appears to me, you not only wish to disfranchise me, but are seeking to *overawe them* to suspend me at once. You say, "you immediately adjourn and claim a district meeting. For Mr Kilham cannot do us no harm as an open enemy, but he will do us speakable hurt as a secret one. If Mr Kilham continue among us, after such gross and malicious assertions we to all intents and purposes plead guilty, and must by the public be supposed to be a company of villains."

Have you a right to interfere with our district? Has any person a right to call a meeting of the preachers but those who live in the district? Do you think of overawing Mr Hunter and the brethren into your measure? Which of the three evils am I guilty of, which are specified in the rules of pacification? Immorality, erroneous doctrine, or want of abilities for the work? If I meet, will they pursue your plan, and expel me immediately? Is it reasonable that my brethren, the preachers, should be my accusers, witnesses against me, and be judge and jury? Are our methodistical laws capable of taking this step, without the people being allowed to hear the trial, or speak a word in favour of the defendant? Ought I not at least to have a jury chosen by the people, and the trial to be open for all our friends? Or will you show your independence of our societies and congregations, and expel me by the power you possess in yourselves?

If I *must* be called an enemy, have I acted as a false one? Did I not oppose in full conference alone, (nearly alone) your measures with Dr Whitehead and the London trustees? Which in a great measure have been the cause of all our troubles ever since; and the expence of the lawsuit which is just ended, will be to our sorrow, for many years to come. Did I act as a secret enemy in the letter which was read and torn in pieces in the Bristol conference? And though I wrote last year, anonymously to prevent the cap-

stage, did you not all know what I wrote, as well
 for people? Have I not published my name with
 pamphlet, and told you where it was printed? If I
 left the connexion you might have represented my
 as a proof of chagrin or disappointment. But
 I am with you, enjoying all the advantages of
 connexion, and aiming to do good to our body at
 how can I be a secret enemy? I appeal to God,
 searcher of all hearts, that sincere love to the preach-
 and people, was the only motive which induced
 to write. And shou'd you continue to call me your
because I have told you the truth, the Lord will
 or later convince you of the unjustness of your
 and proceedings. I ask you in the name of
 do the evils I complain of exist? Have I exag-
 gated them, or concealed many circumstances which
 had have illustring different parts of my pamphlet?
 expelling me from the connexion prove that you
 right, and that I am wrong? Would there be any
 in acknowledging that these evils exist, and lay-
 them aside immediately? Would not this method
 more acceptable to our people, than continuing the
 and expelling me? I appeal to your consciences,
 whether you can as honest men banish me from the
 connexion for what I have done? Will not casting me
 from among you, and holding fast the evils that
 among us, be the direct way (to use your own
 expressions) to convince the public "to all intents
 purposes that you are guilty," and lead them to sup-
 that you are "a company of villains". On the
 other hand, it will be possible to convince the public,
 if you wish to remove every thing that hinders the
 prosperity of our cause; and shew them that you are
 honest men, by suffering one of your body to continue
 with you, though he has had the courage to point out
 things which may be removed to the advantage
 of our people, and for the glory of God.

Mr Pawson insinuated, that I could not continue in
 connexion with a good conscience under these views.
 I were silently to pass them over, without striving to
 have them removed, my conscience would reproach me.
 While I endeavour to the utmost of my power, to

re-

redress the grievances complained of, my heart does not condemn me for abiding where I am called. I can assure you all, and all the world, that I do not fear what you can do unto me. If you cast me out, the Lord will provide. It would be wicked in me to contradict and tell you I am sorry for what I have done, when I feel a contrary principle in my heart.

You declare, "so bad a book has not been published among us since the first revival of the work of God," and you add, "we look up to you and the district committee for redress. Our wounded cause, and the characters of preachers in general, call for it immediately. The cause of God is at stake, and if justice is not done in this case, we may take our farewell of primitive methodism." You all know, when evils have been exposed in the church of Rome, or in national churches, the cry of the clergy has always been, *the church is in danger—The cause of God is at stake—The religion is likely to be ruined. &c.* Is our cause wounded by my pamphlet, or the evils it complains of? Will the cause of God among us, which is now at the stake, be ruined, unless Alexander Kilham be expelled from connexion? If you mean by the cause of God the evils I have exposed, as the reproach of methodism, I believe they are at the stake, and will soon be burnt up: but the *real cause of God*, will receive no injury by what I have done. And my book can only be considered as *bad by those, who wish to keep our people in ignorance and to continue the evils which it exposes.*

I am not certain whether Mr Hunter will call at the district meeting or not. If he should, I cannot prevent my pamphlets from being circulated. They must appear at the bar of the public: and you may depend on it, your letter to Mr Hunter, and my animadversion on it shall be published also.

I am, your affectionate servant in the Gospel,

ALEXANDER KILHAM

I am exceedingly sorry to find two or three names in this curious letter. I am conscious the men I allude to, are very liberal in their sentiments. Many of our friends will grieve to see them joining in a work, which

reproach to liberty of conscience. I hope they
 ed in haste, and will repent of the rashness of their
 ceedings. It is well known by many of our friends,
 t they earnestly desire a reformation to take place
 ongst us. And they insinuate, that we shall never
 pper till this be accomplished. I consider the out-
 es of the bull to be Dr Coke's and the rest to be Mr
 wson's.

The passage in the title page written by Dr Coke, was
 as a comment upon a letter, which he and Messrs
 ther and Pawson circulated. As he sent the same
 iment to several persons, it cannot be any breach
 friendship to publish it to our societies. If it had
 in a private letter, as he has declared war solemnly
 inst me, I should have been justified in giving it to
 world. In this passage, you find the Dr represent-
 the methodist preachers, as the most perfect aris-
 cracy in the world. "The people have *no* power,
 the *whole* in the fullest sense which can be con-
 ed." Have I declared any thing equal to this in
 pamphlet? He represents the methodists as in a
 e of slavery, and observes, "If there be a change
 avour of religious liberty, the people certainly should
 e some power." I have endeavoured to shew what
 ty they accept to have, and pressed on my brethren
 grant it without hisitation. This good man comes
 ward with all the zeal of a cardinal in the tenth
 tury, to persecute me for speaking out to the people,
 t he had declared to me in secret. Is it right for
 o have the *whole* power, and our people *none*? Does
 the good Dr insinuate, that they ought to be freed
 n bondage, if *we methodist preachers should suffer any*
ge to take place in favour of religious liberty? I hope
 good man will learn in heaven to be constant with
 self, if he cannot learn this useful lesson on earth!
 t is amazingly strange that Mr Pawson should come
 ward to persecute me, after what he published last
 on the same subject. I will quote a few passages
 his excellent pamphlet, with short notes upon them,
 leave my readers to judge, whether he ought to
 ute his own sentiments in what I have written or

In the sixth page he says, " Brethren, for God's sake
 " open your eyes in time, before it be forever too late
 " and endeavour to see persons and things as they really
 " ly are. The trustees, [and do not many of the
 " preachers also ?] want to bind you in chains of their
 " own making. The preachers wish to leave you
 " liberty, as you have ever been, [Is this really true
 " are our people in this state now ?] to follow the
 " penings of divine providence, and on all occasions
 " take such measures as shall appear to you to be most
 " for the glory of God." Then, according to this de-
 " claration, if the people think that they are led by di-
 " vine providence to adopt the out-lines which I have
 " suggested, they are on *all occasions* to take such measures
 " as shall appear *to them* to be most for the glory of God.
 " Happy would it be for our societies, if you would al-
 " low them this privilege. " I would seriously ask you
 " does reason or religion require you to leave to a ma-
 " jority of the trustees, [might he not have added, or
 " preachers ?] how often you shall have preaching,
 " at what particular times &c ?" In this passage Mr
 " Pawson begs of you for God's sake to open your eyes
 " before it be too late, and to watch the motions of trust-
 " tees. And yet, because I have gone a step farther, and
 " intreated you to open your eyes and to *watch our mo-*
 " *tions*, he wishes me to be expelled the connexion! On
 " open your eyes, and endeavour to see persons and
 " things as they really are," and then you will soon be
 " able to determine, whether I deserve to be expelled, for
 " proposing to the preachers and to you, the out-lines of
 " a constitution, that would make our interests one for
 " ever. Only follow the doctrine of this passage, and
 " shall be perfectly satisfied.

The following words are more striking. Page 7.
 " Speaking to the people he says, " you have not only
 " built our chapels, but you bear every burden of
 " temporal kind. Why then should you be excluded
 " from having a proper share in the government, or
 " least in the regulation of the church of God ? Or
 " a few trustees, (and he might have added, or preachers
 " ers) be your representatives ? Are your consciences
 " to be wholly subject to their will ? Do you not know

that as to many of them, their judgment stands directly opposed to yours?

"Can even the preachers be your representatives, so as to decide absolutely for you *in things not enjoined of God*? They are your servants for Christ's sake, and I trust a very great majority are willing to comply with your wishes, and to serve you in every thing which tends to the glory of God, and your souls salvation. But others of them differ in judgment from you, and therefore you must maintain your freedom, and assert your right to every ordinance of God's and every thing else which concerns your welfare.]

"Your leaders being the most intimately acquainted with you, are the most proper to represent you; but even a leader may differ in judgment as to the matter under consideration from a majority, if not the whole class. Therefore in the name of the Lord stand upon your guard, and let no man or number of men bring you into bondage." This is such a beautiful allusion, and so much the sentiment of my pamphlet, that I shall only beg you to attend to one text of scripture, and then pass on to other places, equally worthy your attention. Our Lord charged his disciples to follow the doctrine, but not the example of those that sat in Moses' chair. "For God's sake," my brethren, follow the excellent advice of this passage. But do not follow the example of its author, when he rises up to persecute a brother, and seeks to have him cast out of the connexion, for speaking the *same things* in other words.

If you value your own happiness, *mark, learn, and inwardly digest* the following passage: which you will find in the seventh page.

"At any rate, brethren, keep your liberty. If you think it not safe to trust the conference with your spiritual privileges, then, in the name of the Lord, I entreat you to *keep them in your power*, and insist upon it that whenever it shall happen, that any considerable number of your society shall wish either to have preaching in church hours, or the sacrament in your own chapel, [or any thing else that concerns the welfare of the society,] then your assistant shall call all the trustees, leaders, stewards, and local preachers,

"in

" in that circuit together, and these shall take the mat-
 " ter into serious consideration. And if it shall appear
 " to a majority of them, that it would be most for the
 " glory of God to have either the one or the other
 " or both; then in God's name let it be so. Or if the
 " method [Particularly mark these words] does not
 " meet with your approbation, then let your whole
 " society assemble together, and consider the matter
 " in the presence of God; and if it shall be found
 " agreeable to the majority that you should have the
 " above privileges, then let it be done accordingly.
 " AND LET THIS CHRISTIAN AND BROTHERLY METHOD, BE ALWAYS TAKEN
 " IN ORDER TO MAKE KNOWN YOUR MINISTERS
 " TO THE CONFERENCE."

O that these blessed words were engraven on all your
 hearts, as with the pen of a diamond! Then every
 thing which I have recommended would be considered
 at once, and as far as you thought it according to
 scriptures, it would be adopted. Forget, if possible,
 the man that is persecuting me, and let his word be
 rule of your conduct, which so nearly concerns your
 welfare and happiness at this time!

Passing by many places in the pamphlet, which are
 worthy of the *deepest attention*, I shall conclude with
 a few remarks on the passage inserted in the title page,
 which is like the top stone to every thing that has been
 said before. In those admirable words, our good friend
 calls upon us in the name of the Lord Jesus, to maintain
 the rights of our consciences. Let us reduce this
 solemn charge into practice as soon as possible! Then
 we shall "suffer no man or number of men" to deprive
 us of those privileges which are our right before God.

That the reign of popery is fully ended *even among*
 is a doubtful case with me. Is it not a species of popery
 to keep our people ignorant of a number of things
 which concern their happiness? Is there no popery
 in the evils I have represented in the pamphlet? Is there
 no popery in the famous bull, which our worthy friend
 signed, to have me arrested, and cast out of country
 for enlarging upon the plan which he had laid down?
 Is there no popery in the mode of trying criminals
 among us? Does not the inquisition arrest different

as, and both try and execute them, without the knowledge and against the consent of thousands of the people? The London bull claimed a right to have me brought before the bar of the district meeting, not one of a thousand of our people knowing any thing about it. My trial was to have been by the preachers themselves, without the people being admitted to hear what I said, or to speak a word on the occasion. They have power, to accuse, to produce evidence from themselves, to try, cast, condemn, and suspend me, till the next conference. If this is not popery, what is? When the reign of popery is fully ended with us, then the plan I have suggested, or one similar to it will be adopted. Remember then O ye methodists! that if the reign of popery is really past and gone, it is returned to you under a different shape, and with a new name. In the name of him who bought you with his blood maintain the rights and liberties of your own consciences," by refusing to admit it again into your congregation. Be upon your guard, and convince your brethren and the world, that you are resolved to follow the doctrine of this good man, if you cannot follow his advice!

In concluding, I appeal to every candid unprejudiced person, how far Dr. Coke and Mr. Pawson had a right to interfere in claiming a district-meeting to have been tried, when they have expressed their sentiments in stronger language than I have done. I shall only add to my address to the London conference, which was read when I was tried for writing a former pamphlet; which affected the preachers to such a degree, that the greatest part of them wept while I read it. 'If I have fairly tried either at a district meeting or in the conference, I only intreat for these few observations to be attended to, and then I shall be perfectly satisfied.

First, that the pamphlet may be read before the preachers that sit in judgment on me: or that it may be read privately by every preacher who has not read it before my trial commenceth. If this request is not complied with, I shall look on myself exposed to condemnation, without being fairly heard. No judge or jury ought to pass sentence, before they have examined the charges brought against a criminal.

" Secondly. I request that what I have done, and what I have written may be tried by the word of God.

" I appeal from all human laws and rules, to the law and testimony of the living God: and beg that the charges brought against me may be tried by the word that shall judge us at the last day.

" Thirdly. I beg that my providential call to what I have done may be attended to. That no detached word or sentence may be brought as a witness against me; but that the scope of my arguments may be fairly stated, and every step taken in the affair, to which truth and uprightness require.

" Fourthly. I particularly request, that time may be allowed for my trial. A few hours spent in this way may be of service to me, and the cause at large. I sincerely beg of you, my brethren, *who favour a righteous cause* to become my advocates. It will be painful for me to speak before the brethren, but if you will come forth *to the help of the Lord against the mighty*, truth will prevail.

" Lastly. If it can be proved that I have acted contrary to the word of God, and the engagements I have entered into with you, I beg that judgment may be mixed with mercy. Reprove, rebuke, correct, and expel, if you think it will be for the glory of God, and the interest of his kingdom. But if I cannot be convicted by the word of truth; I sincerely beg you *not pass sentence against me, lest by doing this, you expose yourselves to the judgments of the Almighty.*

POSTSCRIPT.

Since my pamphlet circulated in different places, I have received a great number of letters, from many interesting men, in many large societies, and from several preachers. They live in separate circuits, and had no knowledge of each others writing. I therefore take the liberty of publishing extracts from several of them; hoping my friends will pardon, if I am contrary to their will in this matter. I am confident that their names would add weight to their

ments, were I at liberty to publish them. Three of them wished I had left out of the pamphlet, those parts which are farcassical, and had explained a few other passages in it.

A very respectable friend, belonging to a large society writes: "I have heard very little respecting your pamphlet. I think it will have a considerable influence in promoting a renovation.—I have heard last week of the alarm it raised in London. Wrath from the metropolis is like the roaring of a lion. Very terrific and lordly indeed! I expect most of the preachers will sign the pamphlet's condemnation. It will almost be as intolerable as Paine's rights of man. But I think you have courage and fortitude enough to stand the trial.—I told Mr—I thought your case was rather peculiar. You were about to be tried for writing and publishing a libel against the body of methodist preachers. That in this trial your accusers were to compose the jury, pronounce the sentence, and inflict the punishment. This does not sound well in the ears of Englishmen, who are accustomed to more equitable treatment. I really think if they sit as judges in this case, the jury ought to be disinterested men."

Another friend, connected with a large society, writes as. "The principle and general tendency of your pamphlet has my unfeigned prayers, that the conference may very soon adopt some measures to incorporate the body at large with themselves, in every thing which respects our government. As I firmly believe this is the New Testament plan, I have no hopes of lasting peace till it is fixed. I perfectly agree with you in thinking the peace was only patched. The ulcer remains, and that some plan similar to yours is the most likely to heal it. As I believe the work of God is carrying on among the methodists, I cannot but mourn that principles should arise in our system which appear diametrically opposite to it. That the seeds of our desolation should spread with our age and extent. The watchmen of our Israel ought to see and heal. At present individuals may pray and mourn, and converse and address conference

"ference, and that is all. If more power be assumed
 "it will be very dangerous. I much doubt the conference
 "adoption of the principles of your plan. They
 "either do not see the necessity of it, or they see it too
 "clearly, and wish to prevent it. Which I know not.
 "The purport of your pamphlet I do perfectly ap-
 "prove. That, the Lord being my helper, I will be
 "every scriptural means to cry aloud in the ears of the
 "conference, that unless a greater union be established
 "between the different parts of the body, we appear
 "to have no human or scriptural ground to prevent
 "the most destructive division. A cry for mastership
 "will be heard in our camp—a struggle for power must
 "take place—the relative of brethren will cease—
 "worldly policy, with all its infernal effects, will leave
 "our connexion—love will be lost: so far as we de-
 "part from scriptural principles it must be so. Many
 "of the people see it. They love, they revere
 "the conference and forbear, in hope that the preach-
 "ers will prevent a contest, and gradually support such
 "measures, as will bring about an union, on simple New
 "Testament grounds, applicable to the connexion.
 "Every step that supposes a division of interests be-
 "tween preachers and people, originates in that wor-
 "ldliness, which is earthly, sensual, and devilish. If we
 "are not brethren, let us separate. If we are let us
 "as such, confide in each other, and keep close to the
 "rule of God's word. Let the politicians of this world
 "sustain their tottering plans by artifice.—The gospel
 "of Christ needs it not."

Another worthy friend says, "I have considered
 "my duty to search after truth and to contend for
 "liberty. With regard to religious liberty, I think
 "I hope that our wings are well nigh grown. Many
 "are trying them, and all will take flight soon.

"Trueman and Freeman's letter spoke my sentiments
 "in what concerned me as a steward of—society.
 "Good cause had I then to complain, having at that
 "time a tyrant and a scourge to deal with. Their
 "names were——and——They fought all
 "year themselves, treated us with much disrespect,
 "very much hindered the work of God.

With regard to money matters, I think it highly reasonable, that they who give it, should know what use it is put to. I know that one of the above mentioned would not shew his accounts, that went from us to the conference to any one. This creates suspicions that your proposed quarterly and district meetings will effectually do away. We seem at present, after all that has been done, like a rope of sand. It is therefore necessary that something be done to bind us together. I do therefore give my hearty consent to your plan."

Another valuable friend says, "I am sorry that those preachers in London should be so foolish as to show their intention to act the part of spiritual tyrants. A spirit of examination has gone forth among the people. Truth will be more thoroughly sought after than heretofore: the acts of oppressors will be more closely investigated. Their designs will be (or are already) seen through. Liberty, God's inestimable gift to man, is prevailing, and will prevail. It is written, *fear not for I am with thee, be not dismayed, I am thy God?* I hope you still possess the free independent spirit of an Englishman. The hearts of Messrs. Coke, &c will not deter you from acting that part, which appears calculated to promote the happiness and interests of society. You have a heart that will spurn with indignation the thought of basely forsaking the cause, because danger threatens and despots oppose. You will disdain to act the coward. Go on and prosper. You shall in the end reap, if you faint not?"

A friend, who is a leading man in one of the large societies in England writes thus. "Of the friends of religious liberty I have not met with one who disapproves a single sentence in your pamphlet. How should we, when they are the very things we have long wished for, but durst not express the whole of our wish; well knowing if we did, we should lose all. I am commissioned to say from many of our friends, that they think themselves and the connexion much obliged to you.

"The

" The convention of preachers may strive to crush
 " you, but they cannot crush the work of God.
 " spirit of religious liberty is gone forth, and
 " spread, though an host of preachers should oppose
 " it. The people will not be priest-ridden. They
 " and will think for themselves. We are not dispo-
 " sed to take things on trust, on any man or set of men
 " bare word. Why should we? Why has God
 " given reasoning faculties, but that we may use
 " them?

A leading man from another large society says,
 " Being informed that the *higher powers* want to have
 " you suspended, I inform you, that I am glad
 " have written, and be assured that a good number
 " will support you, if they do suspend you.

" Least you should not know, I inform you, that
 " ——— has 800 pounds, and (though he has
 " no family) he can dispense with what he can
 " from the preachers fund: and now is very
 " being married.

Another sincere friend to methodism writes,
 " have read over your pamphlet, and have weighed
 " what may be said for and against it: and I have
 " gone a long way in your favour. I have just
 " reading the minutes of the conference, and find
 " that "The Progress of Liberty" hath just app-
 " eared in season. I am quite of your sentiment,
 " some step should be taken, or the itinerant plan
 " soon come to nothing. I am surprised to find
 " charge on the last years minutes from this
 " of——If I live, I shall wish to have it explained
 " really think we are obliged to Trueman and
 " man for bringing these most enormous expences
 " light."

" A leading man of another society says."
 " prove of your book in the main. I believe
 " motive has been pure in writing. I am persuaded
 " some things may be mended in our connexion
 " as truth will bear investigation, whatever
 " not bear that, ought to be thrown away. I
 " a great majority of our travelling preachers
 " upright men, but I believe there may be
 "

als of a different stamp. I cannot see any thing
 capital in your book to cause you to be either cast,
 condemned, or expelled. I believe it is easier to
 change your publication, than to overthrow it by
 sound argument, or matters of fact. In my opin-
 ion, you hint at several things which deserve both
 consideration and amendments. May God crown
 your labours with abundant success, and your soul
 with fulness of love!

A very respectable travelling preacher writes
 "I entirely approve of your out-lines. The
 plan is most certainly comprehensive, simple, and
 its parts properly adopted to the purposes of
 your good government. In case such a constitu-
 tion should take place, I cannot forbear an antici-
 pation of the pleasing consequences. And I am
 confident that, herein I am expressing the senti-
 ments of the greatest part of the preachers, into
 whose hands your progress will come. There are
 no reasons, which I think will induce a few to
 oppose it, with no small degree of violence. The
 first is, that your scheme is too developing: it
 will not let the public cash lie behind the screen.
 The second is, that it was not conceived in the sage-
 street of——nor brought forth with all the dig-
 nity of——Bps, but acknowledges for its father
 the one who was in his cradle when——were travel-
 ling preachers!

If the high court, city road, London, have not
 altered its ancient rules since the last assizes, the
 author of the Progress will be arraigned and tried.
 I suppose his childish fondness for truth, and
 recollecting that persecution always rendered
 more illustrious and triumphant, will fill him with
 ardour for its support, and make him bold where o-
 thers would blush. I wrote a few lines to attend
 your Progress to——

An old preacher writes as follows. "I write
 chiefly to encourage you, because I foresee you will
 have some powerful opposers among your brethren;
 partly to advise you to be cautious in your pro-
 posals for a new constitution, lest your opposer
 should accuse you of self-sufficiency."

"A great part of your plan I approve of, especially
 "respecting finances—the preachers fund—admitting
 "the people to assist us in these things—and consulting
 "them about local preachers, and even in admitting
 "some of those to travel. For I have long been
 "suaded, if we take the people with us in all our affairs
 "more than we have done, it will be better for us.
 "I have heard many complaints from some of the
 "sensible of them; and I am sorry to say, there is
 "much truth in their assertions. They say, there is
 "an appearance of duplicity in many of us; and therefore
 "they cannot put full confidence in us. There is
 "nothing in the christian religion that need to be
 "concealed. Let us do every thing in our power to
 "vince both the world and our people, that *real* mes-
 "sianism, is nothing else but *real* christianity.

"The real wants of both traveling and superannuated
 "Preachers should be supplied: and they should
 "suffer no more. They who have a competency
 "of their own, or have gotten rich wives, should abstain
 "from the society, and thereby let the world
 "see they have nothing in view but to win souls to Christ.
 "In this age the people will think for themselves
 "and more; therefore it will be for our profit as
 "well as theirs, to walk circumspectly before them: and
 "to alter our conduct in many things wherein they
 "are plain of us.

"If you could circulate your pamphlet among
 "the people, I am confident you would gain many of
 "them to join you. But I foresee your difficulty; for I
 "know the pamphlet has been suppressed in a circuit not
 "far from where I am. I wish you success in every
 "that is right."

N. B. Last night Mr Hunter informed me, that
 "the district must meet to have me tried on the 18th inst.
 "He has done every thing for seven weeks in his power
 "to prevent it: but Messrs Carlill, Condy, Suter, John
 "Ryle, and Rainsworth, "think it absolutely necessary
 "to meet "to examine me and my book." My
 "colleague is quite of a different opinion. Till the
 "bullet came down, they had no thought of trying me. But
 "your famous letter, has both opened their eyes, and enflamed
 "their hearts!"

Alnwick, 4. Feb. 1796.

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